

From: michelle

Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 11:23 PM

To: Briel, Ron

Subject: regulation of Surgical First Assistants and Surgical Technologists

Dear Ron,

The purpose of this email is to provide more information to the technical review committee as they consider the application regarding Surgical First Assistants and Surgical Technologists and to voice my strong support for regulation of both of these vital professions. I graduated from the Surgical Technologist program at Southeast Community College in Lincoln, NE and have passed the Certification Exam to become a Certified Surgical Technologist. I have been working in Grand Island, NE for more than 25 years in this capacity.

Surgical technologists play an integral role as a member of the operating team. Their main focus is assisting the surgical team to ensure the surgical procedure is performed as efficiently as possible by anticipating the teams needs and maintaining the highest level of aseptic technique to ensure that the patient does not acquire a surgical site infection. Surgical technologists are the only member of the surgical team that is specifically trained in aseptic techniques and methods that should be utilized to minimize the patients risk of contracting a postoperative wound infection. Their attention to making sure that all instruments and supplies that are utilized during the procedure are sterile during the preparation for the case and throughout the performance of the procedure directly affects the outcomes upon completion for the patients. Surgical site infections can cause a case that would have otherwise been considered a success to be seen as a failure by the patient and their family.

Education from an accredited surgical technology program is critical to provide the surgical technologist with this vital knowledge in aseptic technique that directly affects patient outcomes and hospital readmissions. There are over 500 accredited surgical technology programs across the country, two of which are located here in Nebraska and 9 of which are offered online. There truly is no excuse for a surgical technologist to be on the job trained with nothing more than a high school education. The surgical patients of Nebraska deserve to have their entire surgical team properly educated for the role that they are serving in. These patients are in their most vulnerable state where they do not have a voice to speak up for themselves. They are trusting that every member of the team has their best interest at heart in every step of their care and that everyone has the base knowledge to provide them with the best outcomes possible.

Regulation of the professions of surgical assisting and surgical technology is critical to ensuring

that the State of Nebraska is doing everything possible to ensure that surgical patients throughout the state are being protected from the potential harm that can result from uneducated surgical team members being present during the procedure.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal and recognition of the opportunity to improve outcomes for surgical patients throughout the state.

Sincerely,

Michelle Sanders, CST